



## Invasive Plant Management Plan Environmental Assessment

### What are invasive plants?

Invasive, non- native plants are species introduced from other parts of the world. These plants can rapidly spread and can have severe negative impacts on native plants and animals in Yosemite.

### What species are in Yosemite and how do they spread?

Some plant invaders that currently pose the greatest ecological threat in Yosemite are:

- Yellow star- thistle (*Centaurea solstitialis*)
- Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*)
- Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea maculosa*)
- Perennial pepperweed (*Lepidium latifolium*)

Invasive species are often prolific seed producers. For example, a single yellow star-thistle plant can produce 100,000 seeds. These seeds are distributed by clinging to animals, car tires, boots, and mud on vehicles and construction equipment.

### Why would we be concerned if their numbers increased?

Scientists across the country believe that the encroachment of invasive species is one of the most important causes of ecological degradation. If invasive species continue to spread unchecked in Yosemite, the park's diverse tapestry of native plant and animal communities would be disrupted. Park visitors would view an unnatural, altered landscape. Controlling the threat of invasive plants is essential to protecting the ecological integrity and visitor experience of Yosemite.

Invasive plant species can:

- Reduce biodiversity
- Change fire frequency and fire intensity
- Disrupt hydrology
- Interfere with native animal populations
- Alter nutrient cycles

### What action is Yosemite currently taking to control invasive plants?

Yosemite has actively controlled invasive plant populations since the 1930s, and these efforts continue today. Over the past seven years, park staff has aggressively managed highly invasive species. This control program includes the use of Geographic Positioning System technology to map plant populations. Crews then remove plants using a variety of techniques, including hand- pulling. Treated areas are photographed and re- visited each year to assess results and provide follow- up treatment.

## What will the Invasive Plant Management Plan address?

The environmental assessment will explore alternatives for a comprehensive, prioritized program of prevention, control, systematic monitoring, and research.

Control methods may include hand- pulling, use of weed removal mechanical tools, release of predatory insects or fungus, and judicious use of chemical treatments derived from natural products such as vinegar and/or manufactured chemicals such as glyphosate.

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## How can I get involved in planning?

From January 1 to February 15, 2005, Yosemite encourages the public to submit written ideas and concerns regarding this planning effort. Scoping comments that focus on the following are particularly useful:

- Alternative approaches and ideas to accomplish project goals
- The range of environmental and socioeconomic issues that need to be considered
- Other potential projects that might affect or be affected by this project
- Information that needs to be considered (such as related research) and why
- Information on how you use the park and how this project might affect that use

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## Public Participation

Public participation in the planning process is critical. During the scoping period, two public meetings will be held. Participants will have the opportunity to talk with park staff and submit written ideas and concerns. The meetings will be held:

January 11 - El Portal Community Hall - 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

6:00- 6:30 Open House

6:30- 7:30 Presentation & Discussion

January 18 - Wawona Community Hall - 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

6:00- 6:30 Open House

6:30- 7:30 Presentation & Discussion

To submit scoping comments—OR— to request a copy of the draft document when it is released in spring 2006, contact the park in writing:

Mail: Superintendent  
Attn: Invasive Plant Management Plan EA  
P.O. Box 577  
Yosemite, CA 95389

Fax: 209/379- 1294

Email: [yose\\_planning@nps.gov](mailto:yose_planning@nps.gov)

The status of this and other Yosemite National Park improvement projects will be periodically updated on the park's planning web site. Visit online:  
[www.nps.gov/yose/planning](http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning).